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Aspects of the city

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AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

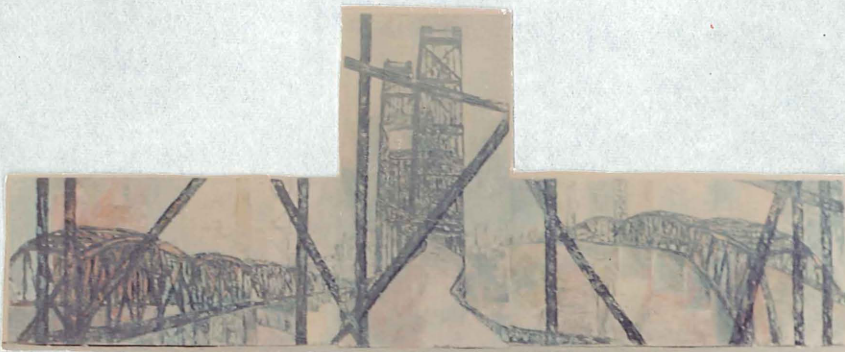
DORIS LOUISE LAIRD for the Master of Science in Teaching

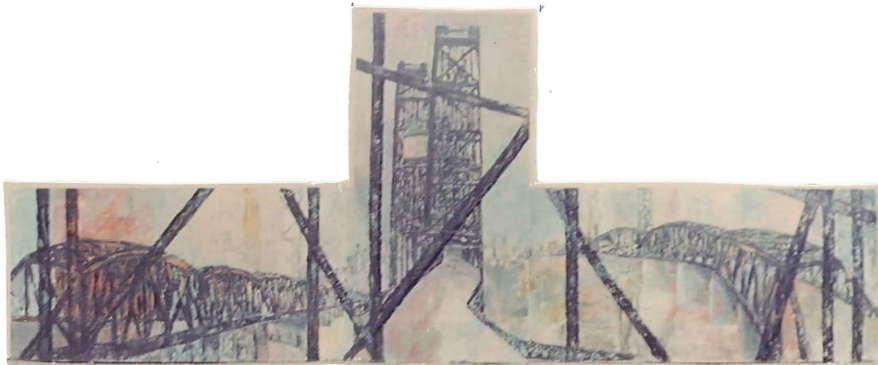
Date thesis is presented: April 27, 1966.

Title: ASPECTS OF THE CITY (An oil painting)

Abstract approved [REDACTED]
(Thesis Adviser)

This is a painting thesis in triptych form on the general theme, Aspects of the City, to be executed with oil paint on three, four feet by eight feet, masonite boards.





The theme evolved into one aspect of a specific city.


Portland, Oregon is famous for its bridges. In actuality, they are the hinges that make it a metropolis instead of two middle-sized urban cities. Thinking along these lines, most sketching was concentrated around these connecting links. Eventually the Broadway, Steel and Hawthorne proved to be the most interesting as to line, pattern, and shape as well as most important in the history of the city. These three were combined into a triptych with a different bridge occupying each panel.

The most difficult problem was one of composition -- how to present each bridge with equal importance in an individual way, yet unifying all so that the viewer would see the three single panels as one entity.


I tried to solve the problem of variation and importance by placing each bridge at a different angle and on a different perspective plane, yet drawing each one on a large scale so that it became the dominant area in the panel. Line and color are the unifying factors. Black is the important color in each bridge and also in the beams in the foreground. These beams are not contained within each panel, as are the bridges, but go beyond and into all three so as to form one composition.

Much knowledge has been gained personally through this thesis -- most of it in the area of compositional planning. It has emphasized the need for detail in preliminary work (line, value, and color). It has shown that there is no substitute for the exhaustion of all approaches to the subject. The learning process here should apply to all works and to the teaching process as well, for these two general ideas of exploration and planning can change the mediocre into something worthwhile.


APPROVED:



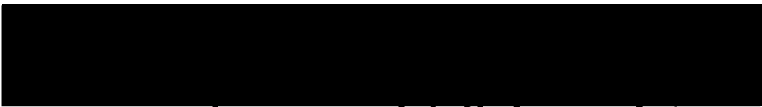
Thesis Adviser



Administrative Officer, Department, Division or School



For the Graduate Council



Dean, Graduate Studies

Date thesis is presented: April 27, 1966

ASPECTS OF THE CITY

by

DORIS LOUISE LAIRD

A THESIS

Presented to the Department of Art
and the Graduate Council of Portland State College

in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Science in Teaching

June 1966

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ASPECTS OF THE CITY

This is a painting thesis. The following is an explanation of its execution.

SUBJECT MATTER

In the chosen major theme, Aspects of the City, many directions of urban life were reviewed. Finally since the city was Portland, Oregon, it was decided that the bridges crossing the Willamette river would certainly be one very important aspect unique to this community. With such a huge population area on the east side and the major business district on the west, the entire city depends a great deal on these connecting links. The Broadway, Steel, and the Hawthorne bridges became the area of concentration because of their age and history in connection with the city.

PROCEDURE

Sketches were made from various angles of each individual bridge. Next, combinations were drawn of the three in different triptych forms. After the decision to do the painting in a horizontal - vertical - horizontal triptych; line, value, and final color sketches were completed.

The finished oil painting was rendered on three (four feet by eight feet) masonite boards. A coat of Gesso was applied as a base, and then washes of transparent color were

painted on in vertical strips. These were covered with a darker transparent wash of blue violet. As some of this underpainting was to remain uncovered in the finished composition, the verticals were used as stabilizing lines and the over-all wash as a method of unification.

Charcoal was used as a sketching medium on the colored background, and, for variety of line, the perspective was changed in each panel. Heavy pigment was applied with a palette knife. All of the bridge constructions were executed in black-their original hue before the Broadway and Hawthorne took on their "new look" of red and orange.

The application of thicker paint in the background held to the vertical lines of the underpainting. Here, there is not a great deal of value change so as not to creat too "busy" a composition.

In the foreground, the heavy construction lines give depth and also act as a means of unification of the three panels by a series of various triangular and rectangular shapes.

As to color, certainly an attempt has been made to pit warm against cool to give the triptych sparkle and vitality.

CONCLUSION

Much has been learned about the problems of an over-sized canvas and the unification of three constructions. However, because my greatest need has been one of composition construction, this larger scale painting has been of most value in that it has magnified the necessity for good basic pattern.